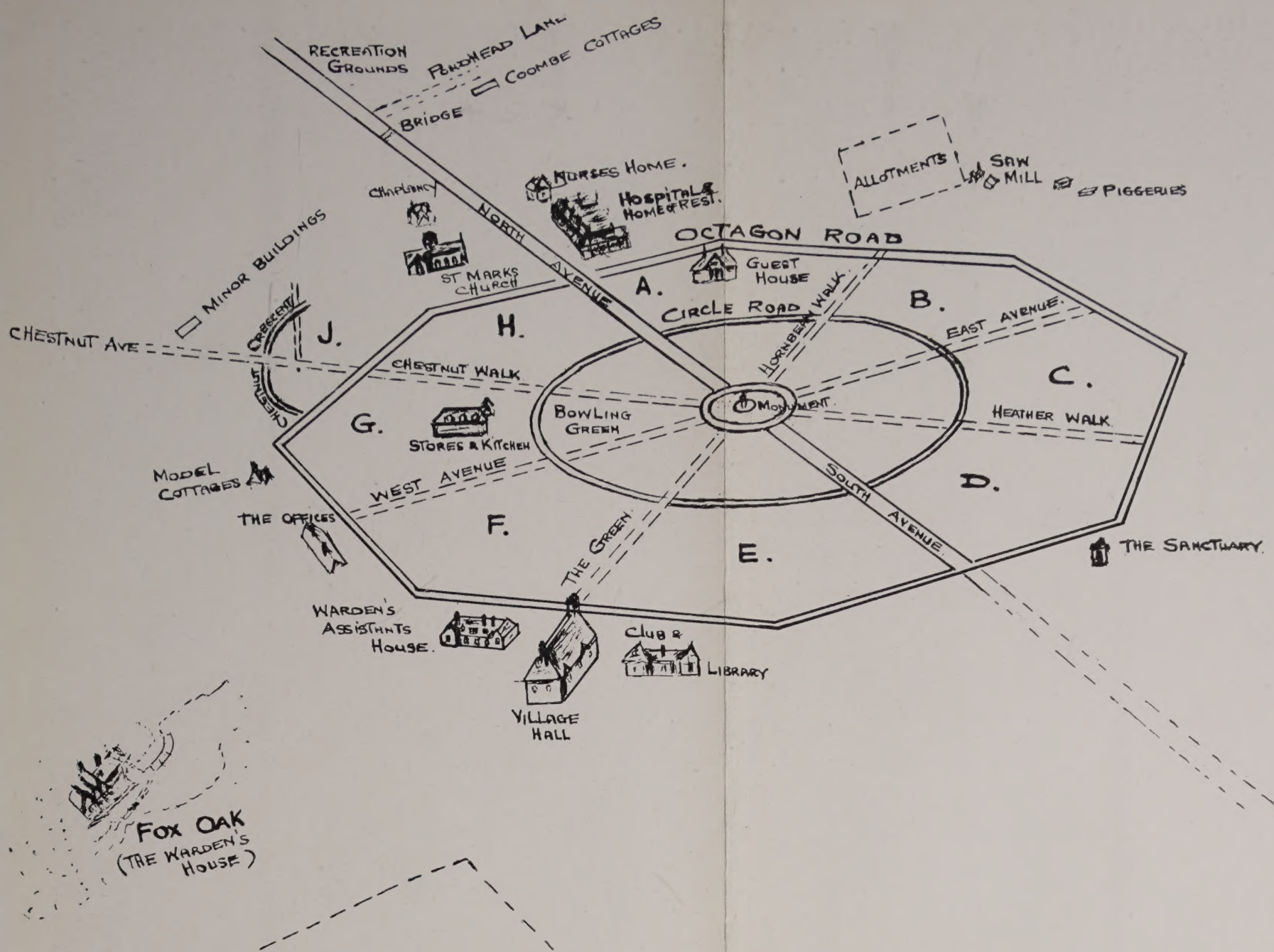
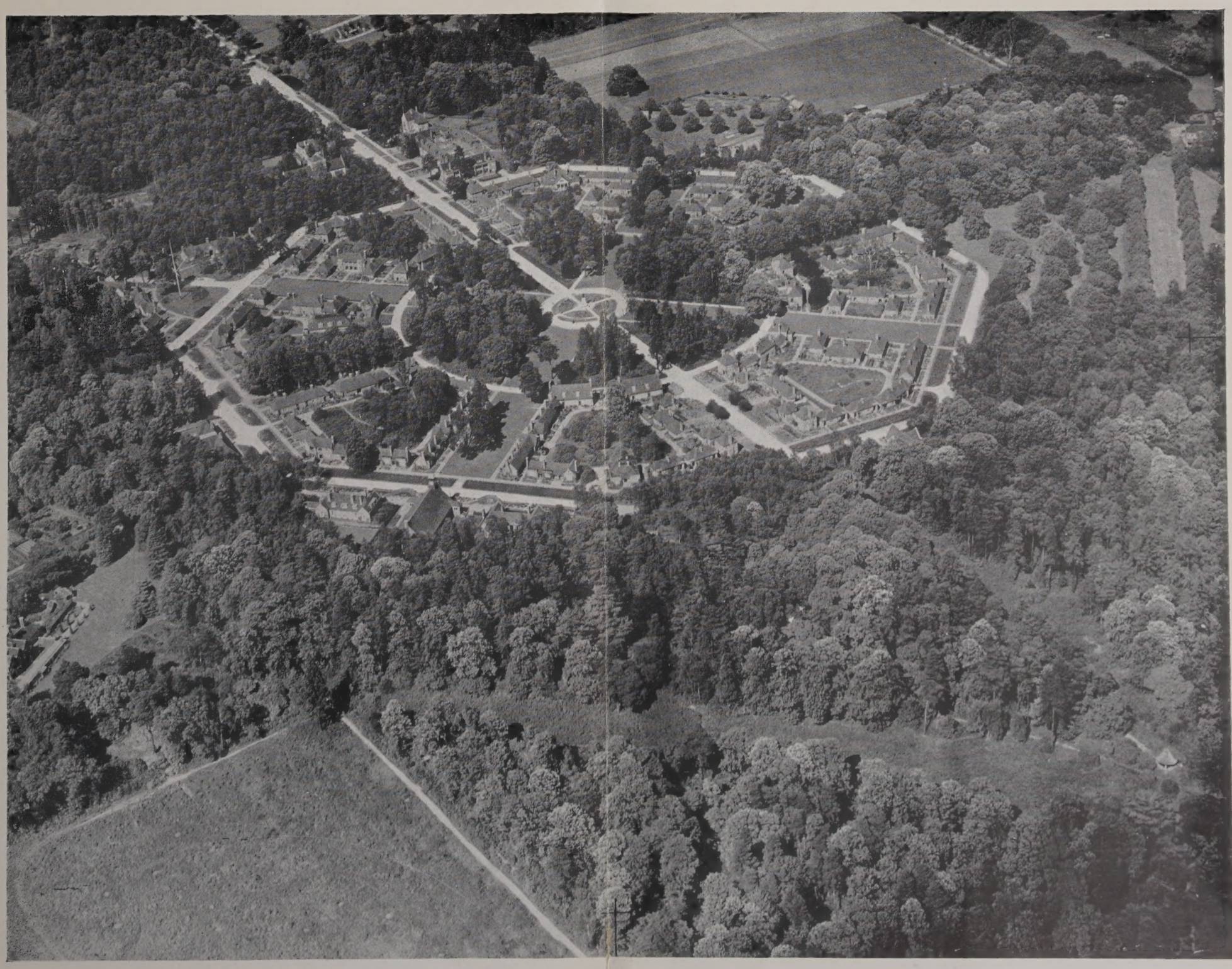
AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF : : : WHITELEY PARK AND VILLAGE AND OF THE BENEFITS CONFERRED. FIRST PREPARED BY ORDER OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF THEIR GRACIOUS MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN ON SATURDAY THE 28TH MAY, 1921

"BLESSED BE THE MAN THAT PROVIDETH FOR THE SICK AND NEEDY"



WHITELEY VILLAGE



Photograph by Air Survey Company Limited

WHITELEY VILLAGE

THE life story of William Whiteley is told in the inscription on the south side of the central monument:—

"William Whiteley, the founder of this Trust, was born at Agbrigg, Yorks., on the 29th of September, 1831, educated at Pontefract and apprenticed at the age of 16 to a drapery firm in Wakefield. He went to London to see the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the busy life of the Metropolis attracted him. He spent ten years of thrift and constant study with a City firm, and then started a small business of his own at 63, Westbourne Grove. Before very long he had won for himself the name of 'The Universal Provider,' and for his business a world-wide reputation. He was the pioneer of the great London retail stores of the 19th and 20th centuries. He died in London on the 24th of January, 1907."

On the 30th October, 1920, the Bishop of London (Dr. Winnington-Ingram), the Chairman of the Trustees, was able to relate to Mr. Whiteley's beneficiaries at the Village some of the inner history of how this great captain of industry launched his noble idea:—

"The first object to-day is to introduce the Trustees to the villagers. But before I do that, one by one, I want to say a word to you. It was many years ago when a very benevolent gentleman suddenly appeared in my room. He said he was a member of my Church and that he wanted me to help him with a great idea he had in his mind for the veterans of industry—for those who had been working all their lives and wanted to have a quiet happy time. This gentleman who appeared in my room was Mr. Whiteley. He asked would I be a Trustee—one of the three mentioned at that stage? I could not help thinking, as I went round your lovely village

this morning, that I should like to bring that benevolent figure to life on earth in order that he might see what his idea and kind suggestion had grown to."

Shortly after the interview related by the Bishop, Mr. Whiteley went to his legal advisor, Mr. William Edward Gillett, of the firm of Messrs. Baileys, Shaw and Gillett, solicitors, with whom he had previously discussed the project, and made his will, dated the 20th May, 1904, containing 15 clauses relating to this Trust. By it he appointed, amongst his original Trustees, besides the Bishop of London, his two sons—William and Frank Ernest Whiteley—the late Mr. Gillett and the late Sir Walpole Greenwell. He gave the last two power to nominate others to constitute the original body of Trustees.

His actual bequest was of the sum of one million pounds for the purpose of providing homes for aged persons—men to be over 65 and women over 60 years of age—and he gave the Trustees very full discretionary powers as to the benefits to be provided.

The Trustees received the last instalment of the capital of the legacy on the 1st November, 1910. In February, 1910, the High Court made an Order that Mr. Whiteley intended the homes to be in a concentrated form. That necessitated finding one suitable and comprehensive site. As, however, by the terms of the will, heavy clay soil was to be avoided and the site was not only to be in the western suburbs of London but also, if possible, within ten miles of Charing Cross, the Trustees—for geological reasons—had difficulty in finding what was suitable. After exhaustive search, the only site found of the required size and character was the Shirley House Estate near Croydon, but the Court refused leave to purchase because geographically its position did not strictly comply with Mr. Whiteley's intention.

After further search, in July, 1911, the present site, comprising about 225 acres, was found, with the assistance of Mr. (later Sir) John

Oakley, of the firm of Messrs. Daniel Smith, Oakley and Garrard, and its purchase was sanctioned by the Court. The highest point on the estate is 196 feet above sea level. Geologically the estate is mostly sand and gravel, being part of the Bagshot sand formation. Situated about seventeen miles from Charing Cross and two from Walton-on-Thames and Weybridge, it stands on the ridge known as Burhill (formerly Burgh Hill) which, with the higher terrace of St. George's Hill, forms at that point the western slopes of the valley of the River Mole. At the date of purchase it was bounded on the north by the Burwood Road and the Walton Poor's Allotments, on the south by Burwood Park (then the property of the Dowager Countess of Ellesmere), on the east by the Burhill Golf Course and on the west by the Seven Hills Road. Together with the Burhill Golf Course, it formed the Burhill Estate which, in the days of King Henry VIII, appears to have been part of Hampton Court Forest. In the earlier part of the 19th century the Burhill Estate was in the ownership of the family of Fazakerly. In 1850 it came into the hands of Mr. F. T. Bircham, the father of the late Mr. Samuel Bircham, a well-known London solicitor. In 1860 the mansion was burned down and the present building (now occupied by the Burhill Golf Club) was erected by Mr. F. T. Bircham. Shortly after his death, Burhill Park and mansion were let to Elizabeth, Dowager Duchess of Wellington (widow of the second Duke), the site of the village and other rough ground being kept in hand. Later on the property passed into the hands of Viscount Iveagh, from whom the Trustees bought Whiteley Park. The plantations in the Park, mostly Scotch and Weymouth pine, Wellingtonias, chestnut, oak and larch, were the work of Mr. F. T. Bircham. There are two knolls at the southern end: one, at the extremity of South Avenue, is known as "Strawberry Hill," from the wild strawberries which once grew there, and the other, a little further west, was named "Huntly Hill," after the Marquis of Huntly, who was a

friend of Mr. F. T. Bircham and advised as to the planting of that part of the estate.

The Trustees completed the purchase in September, 1911. In May of the following year they acquired, with the leave of the Court, the adjoining premises known as "Fox Oak," a private house standing in about five acres of ground (formerly part of the Burhill Estate) now used as the Warden's residence. The house (half-timbered) was erected in 1887 by Mr. Samuel Bircham's son-in-law, Mr. A. R. Ricardo. The architect was Mr. Halsey Ricardo. It commanded a view of the North Downs, which has been restored by the clearance of an avenue giving a vista in the direction of Headley and Box Hill.

The whole site was not only undulating in character but, as purchased, heavily wooded, with great luxuriance of rhododendrons and other undergrowth and a fine avenue of lime trees. It also had a large pond—formerly a favourite resort of wild fowl—rhododrendron walks and other attractive features, all calling for a carefully devised lay-out for the garden village which the Trustees had long since decided the Homes should be. When they first visited the site, the undergrowth was so thick that parties lost touch with each other. The only buildings then were Pondhead Cottage near the pond (formerly a gamekeeper's lodge, since demolished), a dilapidated summer-house close to what had been a croquet lawn at the highest point of the southern end, and some fowl houses, previously part of Burhill Farm. The last were temporarily used by the Trustees for stables. The fine rhododendron walk which runs round the western and southern boundaries was very much overgrown. It has since been cleared and, with the woodlands south of the Octagon, forms a sylvan retreat of no mean order. Mr. Whiteley, with solicitude for the physical needs and comfort of his prospective beneficiaries, ordained that an open-air shelter should be provided as a feature of the Homes. One such

shelter has been erected by direct labour at this end of the Park, close to the knolls mentioned above, and another on the Recreation Field where it serves as the sports pavilion.

Of the five open spaces found on purchase on the eastern side of the Park, at the north-eastern corner a large piece of arable land, which had for years been lying fallow, was levelled, prepared and sown, with expert assistance from Carter's of Raynes Park, with a view to conversion into the Recreation Ground, where the youngsters of the staff and neighbourhood might disport themselves for the entertainment of their elders past the age for games more strenuous than bowls. Another piece further south, which was derelict under rough grass, was first used for parking clearings of timber and is now under potatoes and other crops, a part being reserved for allotments. The third is known as "Chestnut Meadow" close to the Octagon. The fourth meadow, found derelict under rough grass, was ploughed up and prepared and is now under cultivation. The shallow valley running east from the pond, part of which had been the kitchen gardens of the Burhill Mansion, was found under grass and has been used by the Trustees for nursery gardens and as a paddock.

In 1929 the estate was completely rounded off by the acquisition, by exchange, of 14¼ acres in the north-western corner, part of "Poor's Land." This is also under cultivation.

In October, 1911, the Trustees invited six leading architects to compete in designs for the layout, a complete survey having been made previously under the superintendence of Sir John Oakley, who subsequently became, and remained until his death, the Trustees' consulting surveyor.

In May, 1912, the competitors' plans came in and the prize was awarded to the late Frank Atkinson, F.R.I.B.A. The present layout is based on his design, its principal features being the central group in the form of an octagon. Development of the estate with

roads and sewers involved somewhat protracted negotiations with various authorities and several difficult points arose owing to the unprecedented nature of the village contemplated. Consequently, it was not until July, 1913, that the Trustees found themselves in a position to enter into a contract with Mr. Hiram Morecroft, of Acton, for the main roads and sewers. Meanwhile, a pair of cottages had been designed by Mr. Walter Cave, F.R.I.B.A., and built by Mr. William Watson, of Ascot, to enable the Trustees to fix the standard of accommodation and comfort ultimately to be provided in the villagers' cottages. This pair, standing on the west of the Octagon, have since been known as "Model Cottages" and are used for staff residences.

In July, 1913, the Trustees invited the following leading architects to design the first group of cottages and ancillary buildings—Sir Aston Webb, R.A. (afterwards President of the Royal Academy), Sir Ernest George, R.A., Mr. (later Sir) Reginald Blomfield, R.A., Mr. Ernest Newton, R.A., Mr. Mervyn Macartney, F.R.I.B.A., as well as Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Cave, above mentioned. In order to secure homogeneity in the general appearance of the different sections, all the architects were instructed to use the same external materials; so, as intended, the Octagon group presents a combination of different styles in one harmonious whole, with institutional characteristics avoided. There are 201 cottages for single persons, and 55 double cottages for married couples or sisters. The standard of accommodation decided on, with slight variations of floor space consequent on differences of elevation and design, was a kitchen-sitting room with recessed and naturally lit sleeping apartment, bath, scullery, W.C., and accommodation for fuel and refuse. Each of the eight sections of the Octagon was provided with a staff cottage in telephonic communication with the administrative headquarters and each cottage was connected by bell with the staff cottage. The standard accommodation of the double cottages for married couples or sisters was on the same lines, but more ample.

Tenders were invited from several of the leading building firms for the erection of the Octagon group. On the 17th June, 1914, a contract was entered into with Messrs. Henry Martin, Limited, of Northampton.

Of the ancillary buildings contemplated at that time and subsequently built by the same firm, Sir Aston Webb had been asked to design the Hall and Mr. Atkinson the entrances and lodges; the main gates were executed by the Bromsgrove Guild. The design of the Church was entrusted to Mr. (later Sir) Walter Tapper, A.R.A., and the carved woodwork in the Church is by Bridgman's of Lichfield. The works block, known as "Minor Buildings," consisting of electric sub-station, gas-meter house, garage, stables, shed, carpenters' shop, smithy etc., the coal bunkers with a capacity of 225 tons, the weigh-bridge and house, also cottages for the Works Manager and Electrician, were designed by Mr. Walter Cave and Sir Aston Webb. The bridge was designed by Mr. Atkinson and built by Mr. Hiram Morecroft. The electric and telephone cables, plant and installation and gas mains were laid and put in under the superintendence of Mr. H. D. Wilkinson, the Trustees' consulting engineer. The contractors for the main cables were the British Insulated and Helsby Co., Limited. The roads, paths, water mains and drainage system were made and laid under the superintendence of Sir John Oakley. The contractor for roads and sewers was Mr. Hiram Morecroft and, for the water mains, Faulkners, Limited, who also laid the gas mains.

Numerous difficulties had necessitated inquiries and deliberation. The Trustees had no exact precedent to guide them. There had been many groups of almshouses, but, so far as is known, never before had Trustees been called on to establish such a large village of aged persons in an isolated spot. Before coming to decisions on crucial points, the Trustees considered the circumstances of almshouses and garden villages and several were visited.

The woodland, as found, was not only dense in parts, but had been much neglected. Consequently, a good deal of forestry work

was needed, such as the removal of superfluous and dead timber and the curing and preventing the growth of disease. During the process of making necessary clearings and thinning out, "Woodman, spare that tree!" was fortunately an appeal which comparatively seldom had to go unheeded. At this stage the Trustees received assistance from Mr. A. C. Bartlett, an expert on forestry, recommended by the authorities of Kew Gardens.

* * * *

On the 21st July, 1914, the foundation stone of the central monument was laid by the Bishop of London, as stated in the inscription on the north side of the pedestal. The monument consists of a seated figure of "Industry" in bronze, with a deep carving of the Ship of Enterprise at the back of the chair and a bronze plaque with portrait of the founder of the Trust on the pedestal. One of the inscriptions relating to Mr. Whiteley has been quoted above. The other, on the north side of the pedestal, reads as follows:—

"This monument is erected in memory of William Whiteley, of Westbourne Grove and Queen's Road, in the County of London, Esquire, by whose munificent bequest this park was purchased, and these cottage homes were built, for the comfort of old age and as an encouragement to others to do likewise.

"'Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy.' —*Psalm xli.*"

The sculptor was Sir George Frampton, R.A., and the architect, Mr. Cave. Sealed up in a bottle under the foundation stone was placed a parchment plan of the Octagon and main roads, on which are written the names of the Trustees, the architects and the contractors.

So it came that by the 4th August, 1914, the keel of the good ship "Whiteley Village" was in position. But her construction was destined to be delayed considerably by the Great War and it was not until three years later that the two sections of the Octagon

(E and F) on each side of what is now "The Green" and their courts, together with the Hall and Minor Buildings were sufficiently advanced for the admission of villagers.

The first elected villager to be admitted (Miss Eliza Palmer) took up residence at 96, Octagon Road—then known as F 10—on the 17th October, 1917. For some months the villagers admittedly had to put up with discomfort; the walking was rough, entertainments were few and the only place of meeting for worship was the Hall. The Market Stores, which had been designed by Mr. Walter Cave and built by Henry Martin, Limited, were opened for the sale of foodstuffs and other necessaries in November, 1917.

The Communal Kitchen, which has now been firmly established as an integral part of the life of the Village, was an even greater boon in the troublous times of the early months.

On the 25th April, 1918 (St. Mark's Day), the Church was dedicated by Dr. Talbot, Bishop of Winchester, and the sermon was preached by the then Bishop of Stepney (subsequently Bishop of Chester), one of the Trustees.

By the 11th November, 1918, when the war came to an end, 81 villagers had been admitted to the cottages in Sections D. E. and F, but want of labour had prevented the allotment of cottages in other sections. After that, development proceeded more rapidly. By the end of 1919 there had been 205 admissions to the village and 284 by the end of 1920.

* * *

The furnishing throughout was done and other important details provided, on a competitive basis, by Messrs. William Whiteley, Limited, the great house in Queen's Road, Bayswater, that perpetuates the memory of Mr. Whiteley's genius in the business which enabled him so generously to found the Trust.

The following are the buildings and other developments which have been undertaken since the 11th November, 1918:—

(*a*) The Home of Rest opposite the Church, designed as a hospital to replace the staff house in Section C temporarily used for that purpose, and including rest rooms for villagers whose increasing age and infirmities may have rendered them unable to live alone.

The Nurses' Home was built in 1932 and certain additions were made to the Hospital in that same year (Henry Martin Limited).

(*b*) The Club House, opened for the first time by the King on the 28th May, 1921, (by the same firm).

(*c*) The Lady Warden's (now the Warden's Assistant's) house and the Village Hall (by the same firm).

(*d*) Three pairs of staff cottages contiguous to "Minor Buildings" in Chestnut Avenue (by the same firm) and three pairs of similar cottages, known as Combe Cottages, in Pondhead Lane, flanking the Recreation Ground (by W. G. Tarrant, Limited, of Byfleet). In 1937 a further pair of cottages was built in Pondhead Lane by Henry Martin, Limited.

All the above were designed by Sir Aston Webb, P.R.A.

(*e*) Extension of "Minor Buildings" (by G. W. Tarrant, Limited).

(*f*) The Stores and Communal Kitchen in Section G had been opened in November, 1917, but the present kitchen, which forms part of the same block, was not built till 1920. In the same year the Waiting Room was added as another wing.

(*g*) Levelling and layout of courts, grounds and open spaces in the Octagon by Mr. Hiram Morecroft, according to the design of Sir Aston Webb and under the directions of Sir John Oakley, the landscape gardening being from the designs and under the superintendence of the late Inigo Triggs, F.R.I.B.A.

(*h*) A bowling green and smaller practice greens.

(*i*) Recreation-ground pavilion, constructed by direct labour of timber grown and converted on the estate.

(*j*) Nonconformist Chapel ("The Sanctuary") designed by Sir Aston Webb and Son. Foundation stone laid by Colonel the Hon. A. G. Brodrick on the 30th April, 1925.

(*k*) In the same year the Chaplaincy and Laundry were built by Henry Martin, Limited, the former being designed by Sir Walter Tapper in consultation with Sir Aston Webb and Son, who were also responsible for the Laundry.

(*l*) Twelve single and four double cottages forming "Chestnut Crescent" were built on the north-western face of the Octagon in 1929.

(*m*) The Library was added as a wing to the Club in 1930.

(*n*) The Administrative Offices on the western face of the Octagon were built in 1937 to accommodate the staff from the Trustees' London office (which was then closed), and the resident Village office staff which had hitherto been occupying a wing of Fox Oak.

In these last three instances the architects were Sir Aston Webb and Son and the builders were Henry Martin, Limited.

* * *

Among other social conveniences and amenities now enjoyed by the villagers, and not already mentioned, are:—Village post office (with facilities for postal orders, savings bank business and old-age pensions), cinematograph and stage plays, concerts, and lectures in the Hall, work parties, a village library, motor omnibus for outside shopping and conveyance to the station etc., guest-house facilities for villagers' friends making a short stay, a workshop for villagers and cricket matches to watch on the recreation ground.

In evolving their scheme for the homes, and throughout, the Trustees received the able assistance and advice of Mr. David Howat Allan, of the firm of Messrs. Allan, Charlesworth & Co., Chartered Accountants.

* * *

The following are the qualifications and the benefits, other than those already indicated:—

Qualifications.

(*a*) Any person to be admissible to the benefits must, if male, be 65, and if female, 60 years of age.

(*b*) Each applicant must be in a position to give references to show that he or she is of good character and sound mind, is not affected by any contagious or infectious disease and has not been convicted of any criminal offence.

(*c*) Each applicant (whether single or one of a married couple) has to satisfy the Trustees that he or she has a permanently assured annual income (either in his or her own right or guaranteed) of £19 10s. per annum; also, in the case of single persons, that such income, exclusive of state pension, does not exceed £60 and, in the case of married couples, that the joint income similarly does not exceed £75.

Benefits.

(*a*) The Homes consist of cottages, a few one floor up, but for the most part on the ground floor. They are lit by electric light and are self-contained, consisting of living room with range and bed recess, scullery, bath, W.C., and accommodation for coal and refuse.

(*b*) The Trustees provide for the use of each occupant a bedstead (including mattress, bolster and pillow, but not bed linen, etc.), curtains for windows and bed recess, kerbs or fenders for kitchen grates, gas cooker and hot-water geyser, with gas supply to be prepaid on the slot system by the occupant.

(*c*) The Trustees also provide free water and, under certain restrictions, electric light and an allowance of fuel.

(*d*) Dinners can be purchased at the Communal Kitchen for 6d.

(*e*) A Medical Officer is appointed by the Trustees for the medical supervision of the villagers and has answerable to him a Matron and a village Sister. A charge of 16/- per week is made for maintenance to patients when in the Hospital, which has not been taken

NOTE.

The Trustees have found it necessary to make a weekly maintenance charge of 2/6d. for single villagers, and 3/9d. for married couples.

1/7/1950.

over by the Minister of Health. Residents in the Home of Rest pay 14/- per week. Physiotherapy is provided free. A dentist attends at the Hospital weekly and a chiropodist monthly.

(*f*) The Trustees may, at their sole discretion, pay to any villagers a cash allowance sufficient to make up their weekly incomes to 26/- (or, in the case of married couples, 42/-). On Michælmas Day in each year, that being the birthday of the Founder of the Trust, each villager receives a small gift of money or in kind.

(*g*) Rates and taxes are paid by the Trustees.

(*h*) The occupation of cottages is subject to such alteration in the benefits and conditions as the Trustees may, from time to time, in their unfettered discretion, think desirable.

* * *

The average number of villagers is approximately 360, of whom about 100 are men and 260 women. There are 40 Rest Rooms and the number of beds in the Hospital is 30. Since the Village was opened 582 villagers have died and 80 have resigned.

Applicants.

Each application is considered by the Trustees on its merits.

The number of single women applicants is very large.

* * *

The Trustees.

Since the inception of the Trust, the following have retired or died:—

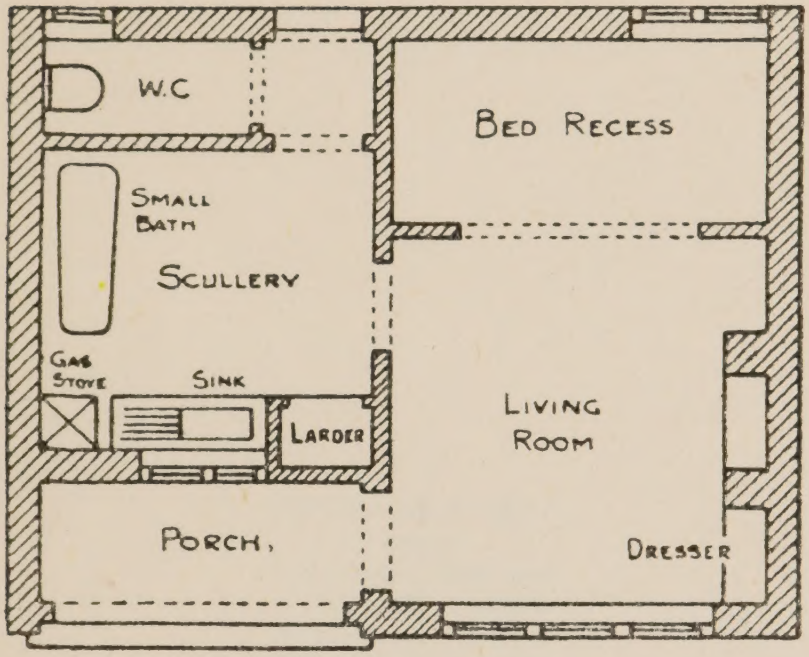
Lord Hillingdon, retired in 1909. Dr. Cosmo Gordon Lang, Bishop of Stepney, retired in 1909, on preferment to the Archbishopric of York. Viscount Sandhurst, retired in 1912, on appointment to the office of Lord Chamberlain. Sir Walpole Greenwell, Bart., one of the original Trustees, to whose keenness and business acumen the

Trust was deeply indebted, died on the 29th October, 1919. Colonel Sir Edward Willis Duncan Ward, Bart., retired in 1920. Dr. Henry Luke Paget, Bishop of Stepney, retired in 1920, on preferment to the Bishopric of Chester. Lord Downham of Fulham, died on the 2nd July, 1920. Sir Edward Feetham Coates, Bart., M.P., died on the 14th August, 1921. Mr. W. E. Gillett, an original Trustee, died on the 7th March, 1927. Mr. Howard Williams, died on the 9th January, 1929. Dr. Henry Mosley, Bishop of Stepney, retired on the 19th March, 1929. Mr. Frank E. Whiteley, an original Trustee and son of the Testator, died on the 19th November, 1929. Colonel The Hon. Arthur Grenville Brodrick, T.D., D.L., died on the 18th September, 1934. Dr. Charles E. Curzon, Bishop of Stepney, retired in 1936, on preferment to the Bishopric of Chester. Mr. William Whiteley, an original Trustee and son of the Testator, died in 1937. Sir Bernard Eyre Greenwell, died in December, 1939. The Hon. Francis Stewart-Mackenzie, died on Active Service in 1943. Sir George Stapylton Barnes, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., retired in March, 1944, and died on the 9th December, 1946. Dr. Arthur Foley Winnington-Ingram, Bishop of London, an original Trustee, died on the 26th May, 1946. Sir Arthur Sackville Trevor Griffith-Boscawen, P.C., M.P., died on the 1st June, 1946. Mr. Edward S. Hose, died on the 12th September, 1946. The Dowager Viscountess Hanworth, retired in June, 1947. Miss S. J. Bailey, retired on the 4th November, 1947.

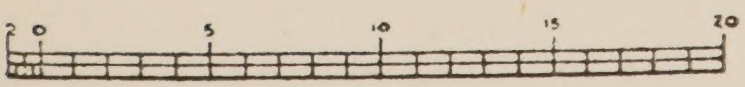
THE WHITELEY HOMES TRUST,
WHITELEY VILLAGE,
WALTON-ON-THAMES.

FOURTH EDITION. FEBRUARY, 1949.

WHITELEY VILLAGE



Sketch of the Standard Accomodation provided in the Single Cottages
Double cottages are similar but with larger Living Room and Bed Recess



Scale of Feet.

HUGH REES, LIMITED,
PRINTERS,
PALL MALL, LONDON, S.W.
Reprint - May, 1924.
Reprint - January, 1928.
Reprint - February, 1949.